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SUMMARY

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

25X1A 1. Viet Minh may submit formal complaint on General Collins' mission:

[Redacted]

There is a strong possibility that the Viet Minh will shortly submit a formal complaint to the International Control Commission concerning General Collins' mission, according to a Canadian commission member. The complaint would probably charge the French with permitting American military advisers to enter South Vietnam to train the Vietnamese army. It would also charge that French adherence to the Manila pact guarantee for free Vietnam is incompatible with the Geneva agreement.

Comment: Such a move would appear to be primarily designed for propaganda. The Geneva agreement prohibits the introduction into Vietnam of "any troop reinforcements and additional military personnel" but does not forbid rotation of those already assigned. Although under the truce terms South Vietnam may not adhere to any military alliance, it presumably is free to accept such protection as is extended by the Manila pact signatories without violating the letter of the agreement.

In early December, the Viet Minh sent similar complaints to Eden and Molotov, in their capacity as co-chairmen of the Geneva conference. The British refused to accept the complaint, saying that it should be addressed to the International Commission.

2. Nehru determined to use Indian influence to maintain Cambodian independence:

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[Redacted]

Prime Minister Nehru is determined that Indian influence shall be used to the utmost to assist Cambodia to maintain its independence, according to the Indian chairman of the truce commission. He said his government was happy to see Indian and American policy coincide with respect to this endeavor.

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Comment: The state visit of the Cambodian king to India on 16 March will be a tangible expression of India's concern with the future of Cambodia, which New Delhi regards as within its sphere of influence. The Indians are not likely, however, to take any action in Cambodia that will openly offend the Chinese Communists.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

3. Comment on Israel's reaction to Egypt's execution of two Zionist spies:

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Egypt's execution on 31 January of two of the condemned Zionist spies may induce the moderate Sharett government to yield to popular clamor for retaliatory measures against Egypt which might also involve other Arab states.

Ambassador Lawson reported from Tel Aviv on 29 January that the death sentences imposed by the Egyptian court were generating progressively more serious popular resentment, with a resultant public tendency to condemn the government's policy of moderation. Lawson also reported that Israeli moderates fear extremist elements may take drastic action against members of the present government or inaugurate a series of border raids.

The Sharett government appears capable of retaining control over any popular demonstration or demand for an all-out war with the Arabs. Recent statements by Sharett and Foreign Ministry officials, however, suggest that the government is likely to yield to extremist and "activist" groups by permitting border reprisals.

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